

ABSOLUTE
Predestination
Not *SCRIPTURAL*:
Or some
QUERIES

Upon a Doctrine which I heard Preach'd, 1704.
to a People call'd *Independents*, at Cocker-
mouth in Cumberland, viz. *That the Covenant*
and Decree were made between God and Christ
from Eternity, concerning Man's Predestination,
or Election; and that those whom God was
pleas'd to make Choice of then, must be sav'd;
Man having no Hand therein.

The plain Consequence of which Doctrine is,
That those who were not then Elected, can-
not possibly be sav'd; but by an Absolute De-
cree of *Reprobation*, or *Non-Election*, must
unavoidably perish, notwithstanding all that
Christ hath done and suffer'd, and is doing
by his Grace and Holy Spirit, for the Salva-
tion of Mankind.

By *JANE FEARON*.

LONDON, Printed and Sold by T. Sowle, in
White-Hart-Court, in Gracious-Street, 1705.

ABSOLUTE

Predestination

NOT SCRIPTURAL

Of some

QUESTIONS

Upon a Doctrine which I heard Preach'd, 1704.
to a People call'd Independents, at Cohasset in New-England, viz. That the Covenant of Grace was made between God and Christ, from Whence, concerning Man's Predestination; or Election; and that those upon God's Mercy, to make Choice of them, and so saved, Man having no part therein.

The plain Dependence of which Doctrine is, That those who were not then Elect, can not possibly be saved, but by an Absolute Decree of Rejection, or Non-Election, must notwithstanding all that God hath done in Christ, and is doing by His Grace and Holy Spirit, for the Salvation of Mankind.



LONDON, Printed by T. Knell, in the Strand, 1704.

TO THE
READER.

THAT which is chiefly aimed at in Proposing these following QUERIES, is, First, to Assert the Honour and Glory of the Holy Omnipotent GOD; who was by Himself Proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord GOD, Merciful and Gracious, Long-suffering, and abundant in Goodness and Truth; keeping Mercy for Thousands, forgiving Iniquity, and Transgression, and Sin, &c. Exod. 34. 6, 7. But whether it be to Honour GOD, by the presenting Him as Author of all the Sin and Iniquity

To the Reader.

of all Kinds that have been committed since the Foundation of the World; I leave to the unprejudiced Reader to judge: For if GOD hath Decreed what ever cometh to pass, as this Doctrine suggests, how can it be otherwise?

Secondly, To manifest my Duty and Love to my Neighbours, hoping it will be readily granted, we are not under the Law, but under Grace; (according as it is written, The Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ, John I. 17.) and therefore ought to come further then the Levitical Law, wherein it was written, Thou shalt not see thy Brothers Ox or his Sheep go astray, &c. Deut. 22. 1. But how much is a Man better

To the Reader.

better than an Ox or Sheep; being the Soul of Man is Immortal, and must either be Capable of Joy and Felicity, or Wo and Misery, World without End? And therefore I dare not sew Pillows under the Arm-holes of any, nor deal with Flattery, nor fear the Frowns of such as I am engag'd with; knowing if I strive to please Men, I shall not be the Servant of Christ.

Thirdly, To clear my own Soul of the Blood of such, by giving them warning, according to the Saying of the Lord to the Prophet, If thou warn the Wicked of his way, to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, He shall Die in his Iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy Soul, Ezek. 33. 9.

To the Reader.

When I undertook to write, I did intend Brevity, but could not compose it so short as I desired, and be intelligible in the Matter; but if the Reader do but seriously consider, the greatest part is Scripture, and worthy to be observ'd, and which we ought to have a Reverend Esteem of, in general, but more especially of that which was spoken by GOD, and our Lord Jesus Christ, with the Sayings of the Prophets; and the Doctrine of the Apostles, who understood the Mind of Christ; and as in Seriousness it is READ, and Prejudice kept out, so it may be of Benefit: Which is the sincere Desire of a Lover of the Souls of all Men.

JANE FEARON.

QUE.

of Gods Absolute Decree from Heresie, or
 by reason of his own Transgression, this
 should be said, by reason of Gods Absolute
 Decree; how both is contradictory Gods
 Sentence pronounced upon him, Gen. 3. 22.
 Because thou hast broken to the word of the

Some

QUERIES, &c.

QUERT I.

SEeing God was pleased in the Begin-
 ning to Create *Adam* in the likenels of
 himself, and place him in the Garden of E-
 den, in a State of Innocency, Holiness, Puri-
 ty and Wisdom, that he could give Names
 to all Cattle, and to the Fowls of the Air,
 and to every Beast of the Field, ac-
 cording to their Natures; and God saw all
 that he had made, was very Good, and he
 gave Mankind Dominion over the works
 of his hands: as the Psalmist, speaking of
 the digniry wherein Man was placed, in the
 admiration of Gods great Goodness to Man,
*saith, Thou hast Crowned him with Glory
 and Honour; Thou madest him to have Domi-
 nion over the works of thy hands, thou hast put
 all things under his Feet, Psalm. 8. 5, 6. Now,
 whether was Adam's Loss and Fall, by reason*

of Gods Absolute Decree from Eernity, or by reason of his own Transgression? If it should be said, By reason of God's Absolute Decree; how doth it contradict God's Sentence pronounced upon him, *Gen. 3. 17. Because thou hast harkened to the voice of thy Wife, and hast eaten of the Tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it?*

QUERT 2. Whether Cain had not a day of Visitation given him of God, and conditionally acceptance with him? According to that saying by the Lord unto him, *Why art thou wroth, and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well thou shalt be accepted,* (look in the old Translation) *but if thou doest not well, Sin lyeth at the door,* *Gen. 4. 6, 7.* Now if we say, the acceptance is by an Eternal, Absolute Decree, and not in the well-doing, is not this to contradict God himself, and consequently no less than Blasphemy?

QUERT 3. Whether Esau was rejected by an Eternal Absolute Decree, before he sold his birthright? Seeing the Apostle saith, *For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected*

jected; for he found no place of Repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears, Heb. 12. 17. Now perhaps I shall here meet with an Objection, because it was said unto Rebecca, The Elder shall serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I Loved, and Esau have I hated, Rom. 9. 12, 13. But why Esau was hated, read Obadiah the first Chap. and 10. v. For thy violence against thy brother Jacob, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever: That Sentence, Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated, was written by Malachi, long after this time; but that which was spoken of them before they were born, was, the Elder shall serve the Younger; which sentence may also be taken Allegorically, relating to the First and Second Birth, spoken of to Nicodemus by our Blessed Lord, John 3. 5. viz. Verily, Verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God; and seeing Christ our Lord layeth the whole stress of entring into the kingdom of God, upon being born again of the Second birth, well might it be said, The Elder shall serve the Younger, or the first Nature give way to the Second; seeing that by the former we are all Children of wrath, as the Apostle saith, even as others. Eph, 2. 3. So while

while Mankind remaineth in this, he is in the state of Reprobation ; but when the first Nature or Birth giveth place to the Second, and Mankind comes to be born again of that Seed that's *Incorruptible by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever, 1 Pet. 1.23.* He's in a state of Election, and loved of God, which answers to that sentence, *Jacob have I loved,&c.* And likewise as the Apostle speaketh concerning *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, which things, saith he, are an *Allegory*, for these are the two Covenants ; the one from Mount Sinai, which Gendreth to Bondage, which is *Agar* &c. but *Jerusalem* which is above is free, which is the *Mother of us all*, Gal. 4. 24, 26. which (also) relates to the Second birth, and that we should all be born of, if the Children of Election or Promise : but as the Apostle said, *As then, he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit ; even so it is now, nevertheless what saith the Scripture ? Cast out the bond-woman and her Son, for the Son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the Son of the free-woman*, vers. 29, 30. Which is as much as to say, The First Nature in which we are Children of Wrath, cannot be heir of the Kingdom of God ; but such as know the second to have Dominion, which is that freedom
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and Liberty, the same Apostle exhorted the *Galatians* stand fast in, saying, where-with here *Christ* hath made us free Gal. 5. 1. Perhaps I may also meet with an Objection, because it was said unto Pharaoh, *For this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my Power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the Earth* Exod. 9. 16. but wherefore it was so said, may be seen in Exod. 3. 7, 8, 9. viz. *And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my People which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry, by reason of their Task-masters; for I know their sorrows and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them; and Moses and Aaron were sent unto Pharaoh, to declare God's mind concerning his People; but when he would not hearken unto them, but said, Who is the Lord, that I should obey his Voice, to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go; Exod. 5. 2.* when he would not hearken to the Lord nor obey his Voice, then his heart was hardened, as the Lord said, *I will harden Pharaoh's heart,* which is the future Tense, or the time which is to come, and therefore not from Eternity.

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QUERT 4. Whether was it by an Eternal Absolute Decree, that *Sodom* and *Gomorah* were destroyed? Seeing the Lord said, *Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorah is great, and because their Sin is very grievous, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, &c. Gen. 18. 20, 21.* And altho he found their Sin grievous, yet through *Abrahams* intercession he would have spared *Sodom*, with it's Inhabitants, if there had been but ten righteous Persons in it; and surely if there had been any Absolute Decree from Eternity for their Destruction, God would have made it known to *Abraham*, and when he so reverently interceded for them, would rather have told him, I have Decreed their Destruction, than so far have condescended to him, till it came to the number of ten righteous Persons; seeing the Lord said, *Shall I hide from Abraham, that thing which I do?* v. 17.

QUERT 5. Why should the Lord give his People conditional acceptance with him, as may be understood by calling unto *Moses* out of the Mountain, saying, *Thus, shalt thou say unto the house of Jacob, and tell the Chil-*

Children of Israel, Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you as on Eagles Wings, and brought you unto my Self; now therefore if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my Covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me? *Exod. 19. 3, 4, 5.* So they entred into covenant with the Lord, and said, *All that the Lord hath spoken, we will do: v. 8.* Notwithstanding they rebelled against him, and their Carcasses fell in the Wilderness, and therefore whether was it by an Eternal Absolute Decree; or because of their rebellion? If by an Eternal Absolute Decree, how by this Doctrine do they make God the greatest of Dissemblers, viz. To make a Covenant with his People, concerning that which he made Impossible for them to have the benefit of?

• **QUERY 6.** Whether *Korah, Dathan, and Abiram's* Destruction, was because of their rebellion, or because it was Absolutely decreed from Eternity? If it should be said, Because it was Absolutely decreed from Eternity; how doth that contradict *Moses*, who said, *If these men Die the common Death of all men, &c. then the Lord hath not sent me; but if the Lord make a new thing, and the Earth open her mouth and Swallow them up, with all that*

that appertain to them, and they go down quick into the Pit, then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord, Num. 16. 29, 30. which they could not do from Eternity, before they had a being.

QUERT 7. Wherefore should Moses say to the Children of Israel? *I call Heaven and Earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you Life and Death, Blessing and Cursing, therefore choose Life, that both thou and thy Seed may Live, that thou mayest Love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and cleave unto Him, &c. Deut. 30. 19, 20.* Now we see upon such and such conditions, they might have had Life, and the Blessing; otherwise Death, and the Curse was to be their Portion: Why should Moses say, *Choose Life*, if it had been Impossible for them to choose it? and if their destruction had been Absolutely Decreed from Eternity, it would have been impossible, according to this Doctrine.

QUERT 8. Moreover when Moses had told them what curses should befall them, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, as may be read at large in Deut. 29. Chap. So that the Nations should say, *Wherefore*

fore hath the Lord done thus unto this Land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger? then men shall say, because they have forsaken the Covenant of the Lord God of their Fathers, &c. v. 24, 25. But if it was Absolutely Decreed from Eternity, might it not rather be said, it was no desert of theirs, they could no way avoid it, God's Absolute Decree from Eternity brought it upon them; [Mark] how by this Doctrine man's Destruction is laid upon God, Contrary to the saying of the Lord by the Prophet (*viz*) O Israel thou hast destroyed thy self, but in me is thy help, Hos. 13. 9.

QUERT 9. Why should Joshua when he was near to draw his last breath, thus direct his Speech to the Children of Israel, and say, Behold this day I am going the way of all the Earth, and ye know in all your hearts, and in all your Souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God hath spoken concerning you, all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof; therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon you, which the Lord your God promised you; So shall the Lord bring upon you all evil things, until he hath destroyed you, &c. Josb. 23. 14, 15.

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The first was upon the Condition that they took good heed to their selves, and that they loved the Lord their God; and the latter when they transgressed the Covenant of the Lord their God, and served other Gods; Joshua although filled with the Spirit of Wisdom and Courage, and had such access to the Throne of God, as at his request the Sun stood still for the space of a whole day, he did not tell the Children of *Israel*, first, That it was because they were of the number of Gods Elect, from all Eternity, surely if it had been so, God would have made it known to him, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things; and Secondly, that they were not of the Elect but of that number that were under Eternal Reprobation, that all the Evil things should come upon them; for according to this Doctrine, they must be one while this, and another that, unless they would deny *Joshua's* dying Words; who told the People how they might Chuse the good, and eschew the evil, but if it was impossible by Gods Absolute Decree, to chuse good &c. Then *Joshua's* Exhortation was in vain?

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QUERT 10. Why should Deborah thus say in her Song, *Curse ye Meroz* (said the *Angel of the Lord*) *curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty*, Judges 5. 23. if it was so decreed that they could not? Was it not hard measure to be so bitterly cursed, for not doing that which was impossible? And according to this Doctrine it was so.

QUERT 11. What was the reason that *Hannah* should thus say, *The Lord is a God, of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed?* 1 Sam. 2. 3. and doth not rather say, he taketh no notice of the actions of mankind, whether good or bad? For according to this Doctrine it cannot be otherwise: And how doth this also lead into a dissolute life, void of true fear, or down into despair? I have seen the man that was under exercise of mind for the good of his Soul, and amongst others he went to hear Sermons, and he heard one hold forth for Doctrine, *That, such as belong to the Election of Grace, should be pluckt as a Brand out of the Fire, or as with a three-fold Cord*; believing such Doctrine, he run into a dissolute Life; and one took

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Notice of it to be worse than before, and spoke to him concerning it; and told him of the time when it was better with him; and his Reply was, *If God will have me, let him fetch me with a threefold Cord*; in as much as there was no need for him to be concern'd; and if he should, it would be to no purpose; now whether the Doctrine of this Preacher did not some way occasion the poor Man's Dissoluteness and desperate Resolution, deserves to be consider'd.

QUERY 12. Is not this Doctrine of absolute Reprobation, contrary to the Message that the Man of God came with to old *Eli*, in the Name of the Lord? *1 Sam. 2. 30. For them that Honour me, I will Honour; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.*

QUERY 13. Wherefore should *David* say, *The Lord rewarded me according to my Righteousness, according to the Cleanness of my Hands, hath he recompensed me?* *2 Sam. 22. 21.* And doth not rather say, *Because of God's absolute Decree from Eternity he hath rewarded me?*

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QUERT 14. Now if there had been such a Decree, why should *David* so command his Son *Solomon* to keep *The Charge of the Lord his God, to walk in his ways, to keep his Statutes and his Commandments, &c. That the Lord may continue his Word which he spoke concerning me, saying, If thy Children take heed to their way to walk before me in Truth, with all their Heart, and with all their Soul, there shall not fail thee a Man on the Throne of Israel?* 1 Kings 2. 3, 4. May we not see here that the Lord promised it upon Condition, but the Condition was not observed; so whether must the Fault have been, on Gods part or Mans, if there was such an absolute Decree before Man had a Being, that he should transgress? By this is not God made the Author of Mans Transgression, and what Less can that be than Blasphemy?

QUERT 15. And whether was *Ahab's* Destruction, pronounced upon him, 1 Kings 21. by reason of the Eternal Decree, or because he had so highly provoked the Lord, in the matter of *Naboth*? If it should be said, Because God had de-

creed he should do so wickedly, that he might destroy him; how doth this Doctrine make God the Author of *Naboth's* Murder; and not only *Naboth's*, but of all the Murder and Blood-shed from *Abel*? Wherefore must *Abab* be punished, for that he could no way avoid? Oh! my Soul come not thou into their Secret, neither take hold of their Paths, who teach such Doctrine.

QUERT 16. Now if there had been such an Absolute Decree from Eternity, why would *David* have expressed himself on this wise; *And thou Solomon, my Son, know thou the God of thy Father, and serve him with a perfect Heart, and with a willing Mind; for the Lord searcheth all Hearts, and understandeth all the Imaginations of the Thoughts; if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever, 1 Chron. 28. 9.* Now if the Acceptance was by the Decree before-mention'd, what need was there for *David* so to command his Son, and so plainly shew upon what Conditions God would be found of him?

QUERT 17. If there had been such an absolute Decree, why did *The Spirit*
of

of God come upon Azariah; so that he went out to meet Afa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Afa, and all Judah and Benjamin, the Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you? 2 Chron. 15. 1, 2. Now whether is Man's Destruction by an Eternal absolute Decree, or for want of seeking the Lord, seeing he will be found of those that seek him? And likewise did not Ezra confirm it in these Words; *The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him, but his Power and his Wrath is against all them that forsake him?* (And said he) *So we fasted and besought our God for this, and he was intreated of us,* Ezra 8. 22, 23. Now if it had been Absolutely decreed from Eternity, what need of so much Fasting and seeking God? And also Nehemiah said on this wise unto the Lord, *Remember, I beseech thee, the Word thou commandest thy Servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the Nations; but if ye turn unto me, and keep my Commandments, and do them, tho' there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the Heaven, yet will I gather them from*

thence, and will bring them into the Place that I have chosen, to set my Name there, Neh. 1. 8, 9. May not we see that there are always Conditions required, which if observed, Men are accepted of God; and if not observed, they are rejected? Where's then the Absolute Decree?

QUERY 18. Whether that Decree the Psalmist spoke of; doth not signify God's Universal Love to Mankind? viz. *I will declare the Decree, The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee; ask of me, and I shall give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the Earth for thy Possession,* Psal. 2. 7, 8. Now if the Heathen are given for an Inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the Earth for a Possession, to the Son of God. Where's then the Number that's absolutely decreed from Eternity for Damnation?

QUERY 19. Whether the Saying of the Wise Man doth not signify Gods Universal Love to Mankind? viz. *Wisdom cryeth without, she uttereth her Voice in the Streets:*

Streets: She cryeth in the chief Place of Concourse, in the openings of the Gates, in the City she uttereth her Words, saying; How long, ye Simple ones, will ye love Simplicity, and the Scorners Delight in Scorning, and Fools hate Knowledge? Turn you at my Reproof, behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my Words unto you, Prov. 1. 20, 21, 22, 23. Now if the Simple, and the Scorners, and the Fools, upon Condition of Turning at the Voice of Wisdom, had the Promise of the Pouring forth of the Spirit, which undoubtedly was able to work a Change in their Hearts, according to the Saying of the Prophet, when the Spirit shall be poured upon us from on high, the Wilderness shall become a fruitful Field, &c. Isa. 32. 15. Where's then the Number that's absolutely decreed from Eternity for Damnation? But if it should be objected, Although Wisdom did cry to the very worst of Men, as it appears; yet such as were Absolutely predestinated to Damnation, could not turn at her Reproof; would not this render God a hard Master, and also a Mockers of such as Wisdom called to, as first to make it impossible by his Absolu-

lute Decree, and then call to them to do that which he had made impossible?

QUERY 20. Why should the Wise Man say? *Let us hear the Conclusion of the whole Matter, Fear God and keep his Commandments; for this is the whole Duty of Man. For God shall bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be Good, or whether it be Evil? Eccles. 12. 13, 14.* For if God by his Absolutely Decree has made it impossible for the greatest part of Mankind to fear him, and keep his Commandments, and yet will bring every *Work* to Judgment, whether Good or Evil, would not this also render him unmerciful; to bring such under Judgment for doing Evil, to whom he made it impossible to do good, or to fear him, and keep his Commandments?

QUERY 21. And again, do not the Words of the Prophet *Isaiah* prove God's Universal Love to Mankind? viz. *It is a light thing that thou should'st be my Servant, to raise up the Tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a Light to the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my Salvation unto the ends*

ends of the Earth, Isai 49. 6. And if Christ is for Salvation to the Ends of the Earth; as Isaiah saith in another Place, Look unto me, and be ye saved all the ends of the Earth, &c. Isai. 45. 22. Where is the Number that's absolutely decreed from Eternity for Damnation ?

Y^e QUERT 22. If it had been absolutely decreed from Eternity, wherefore should the Prophet Jeremiah be commanded by the Lord, to proclaim the Desolation of the Jews for their Sins, and say, Hear ye the Word of the Lord, O Kings of Judah, and Inhabitants of Jerusalem, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Behold, I will bring Evil upon this Place, the which whosoever heareth, his Ears shall tingle; because they have forsaken me, (mark, then not because of an Absolute Decree from Eternity) and filled this Place with the Blood of Innocents; they have built also the high Places of Baal, to burn their Sons with Fire, for Burnt-Offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my Mind, Jer. 19. 3, 4, 5. Now by this doth it not appear, that God never decreed the Burning of their Sons, although it came to pass; but according

cording to this Absolute Predestinarian Doctrine, how is God made Guilty of the Blood of these poor Innocents, notwithstanding he had declared by his Prophet, he commanded it not, nor spake it, neither came it into his Mind?

QUERT 23. Moreover how is that Saying of the Prophet *Ezekiel*, contradictory to that Doctrine of absolute Reprobation? *viz. Say unto them, As I Live, saith the Lord God, I have no Pleasure in the Death of the Wicked, but that the Wicked turn from his Way and Live, Ezek. 33. 11.* Now is there any thing more certain than that God liveth? And therefore will it not follow, so certain it is that he delighteth not in the Death of the Wicked?

QUERT 24. Furthermore whether God, who is long-suffering, gracious, slow to Anger, and full of Mercy, is not rendred by this Doctrine less Merciful than *Nebuchadnezzar*? who although he cast the Servants of the Most High God into the Fire, yet he commanded them first to be brought before him, and said unto them, *Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? Do ye not serve my Gods, nor worship*

worship the Golden Image, which I have set up? Now if ye be ready, that at what time ye hear the Sound of the Cornet, Flute, Harp, Sackbut, Psaltery and Dulcimer, and all kinds of Musick, ye fall down and worship the Image, which I have made, well; but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same Hour into the Midst of a Burning Fiery Furnace, &c. Dan. 3. 14, 15. Here we may see he made Enquiry at their own Mouths; whether the Report he had heard of them was true, yea or nay; and then offer'd them Conditions; whereby they might escape the casting into the burning fiery Furnace; whereas Man hath no Conditions offer'd him, according to this Doctrine, in order to his Escaping Eternal Misery, but must be for ever tormented, for not doing that which he was never able to do?

QUERY 25. Why should the Prophet Hosea say, *Hear ye the Word of the Lord, ye Children of Israel: For the Lord hath a Controversy with the Inhabitants of the Land, because there is no Truth, nor Mercy, nor Knowledge of God, in the Land,* Hos. 4. 1. If God had absolutely decreed (it) from Eternity that it should be so? Wherefore should his Controversy be with them, if they

they could not do what he required of them?

QUERT 26. And again, why did the Prophet Joel say, *Rent your Hearts, and not your Garments, and turn to the Lord your God, for he is gracious, and merciful, slow to Anger, and of great Kindness?* &c. Joel 2. 13. For if they were not in a Capacity to turn unto the Lord, the Prophet's Exhortation was in vain.

QUERT 27. What was the Reason the Prophet Amos said to the Children of Israel, *Seek the Lord and ye shall live, lest he break out like Fire in the House of Joseph, and devour it, and there be none to quench it in Bethel,* Amos 5. 6. If it was absolutely decreed, that they could not seek him, that they might live?

QUERT 28. Why did the Lord threaten Esau, saying, *For the Violence against thy Brother Jacob, Shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever, if that had not been the Cause?* As may be seen in Obadiah, Ver. 10.

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QUERT 29. Why should *Jonah* give this as a Reason for his Fleeing to *Tarshish*, when he should have gone to *Nineveh*, which God spared upon Repentance, saying to the Lord, *I knew that thou art a gracious God, Merciful, slow to Anger, and of great Kindness, and repentest thee of the Evil*, Jon. 4. 1. If Man must be punish'd by an Absolute Decree from Eternity; before he had a Being, or could sin against the Lord?

QUERT 30. Wherefore did the Prophet say, *He hath shewed thee, O Man, what is Good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do Justly, and love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* Mic. 6. 8. If it were impossible for the greatest part of Mankind, to attain unto this? Why should God require it, if he had not put Man in a Capacity of doing it? Should we not account it Injustice even in Men, if they should command us to do that, which they know we have no Power to perform?

QUERT 31. Furthermore why should the Prophet say, *The Lord is slow to Anger*

ger (if it were not so) and great in Power, and will not at all acquit the Wicked, Nah. 1. 3. If he hath no Regard to the Doings of Mankind, as according to this Doctrine, he hath not, but only to his own Absolute Decree from Eternity?

QUERY 32. Moreover why did the Prophet Habakkuk say, *I will stand upon my Watch, and set me upon the Tower, and will Watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall Answer, when I am re-proved*, Hab. 2. 1. And not rather say, if I be one that's prædestinated to Life, I need do nothing but what I please, be it Good or Bad, it cannot alter Gods Absolute Decree; and if I be of that Number that's for Damnation, let my Diligence and Seeking be what it will, it will avail me nothing?

QUERY 33. Why was it said, *It shall come to pass, at the time that I will search Jerusalem with Candles, and punish the Men that are settled on their Lees, that say in their Heart, the Lord will not do Good, neither will he do Evil; therefore their Goods shall become a Booty, and their Houses a Desolation, and I will bring Distress upon*

upon Men, that they shall walk like Blind Men, because they have sinned against the Lord, and their Blood shall be poured out as Dust, and their Flesh as the Dung, neither their Silver, nor their Gold, shall be able to deliver them in the Day of the Lords Wrath, Zeph. 1. 12, 13, 17, 18. Was it not because they had sinned against the Lord, that this Distress was to come upon them? Therefore where is the Absolute Decree?

QUERT 34. Wherefore did the Prophet Haggai call Gods People to consider, what Circumstances they were under, and say, Ye have Sown much, and bring in little, ye eat, but have not enough; ye drink, but are not filled with drink; ye cloath you, but there is none warm, ye looked for much, and so, it came to little, and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it: Why, Saith the Lord of Hosts? Because of mine House that is waste, Hag. 1. 6, 9. Was it Gods Decree that his House should lye waste, that his People might be punished? For according to this Predestinarian Doctrine, hath not God decreed, what ever cometh to pass?

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QUERT 35. Why did the Angel of the Lord say unto *Joshua*, *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my Charge, then thou shalt also judge my House, and shalt also keep my Courts, and I will give thee Places to walk among those that stand by?* *Zech. 3. 7.* May we not see that it was upon Condition, that *Joshua* was to be accepted of God, and to have such a great Place, as to judge his House? But if Acceptance had been by an Absolute Decree, might not *Joshua* have had it for ever, without any Conditions?

QUERT 36. What was the Reason that the Prophet *Zechariah*, exhorted Gods People in the Name of the Lord, saying, *Execute true Judgment, and shew Mercy and Compassions every Man to his Brother, and oppress not the Widow, nor the Fatherless, nor the Stranger, nor the Poor, and let none of you imagine evil against his Brother in your Heart: But they refused to hearken; and pulled away the Shoulder, and stopped their Ears, that they should not hear; yea, they made their Hearts as an Adamant Stone, &c. Therefore came a*
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great Wrath from the Lord of Hosts. Therefore it is come to pass that as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried and I would not hear, saith the Lord of Hosts, Zech. 7. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. Now if it was because that they obeyed not the Voice of the Lord, by the Prophet, that the great Wrath came upon them, as is before express'd; then it was not because of any Absolute Decree, for God is more Righteous, more Merciful, and more Just, than to bring Wrath upon Men, for that which they could in no wise avoid; and if it was Absolutely decreed from Eternity, how could they shun it?

QUERY 37. Moreover why did the Prophet Malachy say? Now, O ye Priests, this Commandment is for you: If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to Heart, to give Glory unto my Name, saith the Lord of Hosts, I will even send a Curse upon you, and I will Curse your Blessings; yea, I have Cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to Heart, Mal. 2. 1, 2. Now whether they were Cursed, because they did not give Glory to the Lord's Name, nor let it take Impression upon them, that they might keep his

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Covenant? or because of an Absolute Decree from Eternity? If any say by an Absolute Decree, do not they contradict God himself, and the Prophet, who spake in the Name of the Lord?

QUERY 38. Doth not this Predestinarian Doctrine make the Coming of Christ void, and his Prayers, Sermons and Exhortations ineffectual to a great part of Mankind? For if Men be of the Number that's elected Absolutely to Salvation; what need have they to regard any of these, but go on in what the Flesh most delights in; but if they are predestinated to Damnation, it is neither Christ's Coming, Sermons or Prayer, Death, Resurrection, or Ascension, will do them any good; for according to the Doctrine of Absolute Predestination, the Decree must stand, whether for Salvation or Damnation.

QUERY 39. Whether the Man that came to Jesus, and ask'd him, *Good Master, what shall I do, that I may inherit Eternal Life* Mark 10. 17. Was hindered because of God's Absolute Decree, or because he did not observe the Conditions, upon which Christ promised it to him,
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viz. By Selling what he had, and giving it to the Poor, and taking up his Cross and following Christ? If we say by an Absolute Decree, do not we pervert Christ's Words, who told him (*viz.* the Man) that he might have Treasure in Heaven, if he observed the Conditions afore said?

QUERT 40. Why did the Angel declare the Birth and Coming of Christ, to the Shepherds, *Luke 2. 10.* Behold, I bring you good Tydings of great Joy, which shall be to all People, &c? And why did Old Simeon likewise confirm it, when the Holy Ghost was upon him, and he came by the Spirit into the Temple, *vers. 25, 27.* with these Words, Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in Peace according to thy Word; for mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation, which thou hast prepared before the Face of all People, a Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the Glory of thy People Israel, *vers. 29, 30, 31, 32.* If God had shut out the greatest Part of Mankind by an Absolute Decree from Eternity, from receiving any Advantage thereby? How are they good Tydings of great Joy to such, who are barr'd the Benefit by the afore said Decree?

QUERT, 41. Why should Jesus declare of the great Love of God, as in *John 3. 16, 17, 18.* And say, God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever (Mark he saith whosoever) believeth in him, should not perish, but have Everlasting Life; for God sent not his Son into the World to Condemn the World, but that the World through him might be saved; he that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God: If the Doctrine of Absolute Predestination be true? For here we may see Condemnation is pronounc'd by our Lord, because of Mens Unbelief, Christ doth not say, God's Absolute Decree from Eternity hath made it impossible for the greatest part of Mankind, to have Everlasting Life, but they that believe not on him, whom God had sent; but if we should say God's Decree, hath made it impossible; will it not be a direct Contradicting of Christ?

QUERT 42. Do not we read also in the *Acts 10. 34, 35.* that Peter spoke expressly
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concerning acceptance with God, upon Conditions, when he said, *Of a Truth I perceive God is no Respector of Persons: but in every Nation he that feareth him, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted with him?* And then where is the Decree that can hinder Man from Acceptance with God, if he fear him, and work Righteousness?

QUERY 43. Why should the Apostle Paul say to the Romans, *As by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation; even so by the Righteousness of one, the free Gift came upon all Men. unto Justification of Life,* Rom. 5. 18. If there had been an Absolute Decree from Eternity to the contrary? But the Apostle speaketh very plainly that the Free-Gift came upon all; and what is more free than that which is come upon all? And therefore where is the Absolute Decree to the contrary?

QUERY 44. Why should the Apostle say, 1 Cor. 15. 22. *For as in Adam all Die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive?* And if Christ died for all that were Dead in Adam, then where is the Number decreed for Damnation, or that have

have not the Proffer of Salvation by Christ?

QUERT 45. Why should the Apostle say, *Knowing the Terror of the Lord, we perswade Men*, 2 Cor. 5. 11. If he had believed there was no Possibility of Salvation for the greater part of Mankind? For according to this Predestinarian Doctrine, it doth appear there was not; therefore to what purpose was it, or is it, to perswade any? For they who are elected to Salvation by this Absolute Decree, stand in need of no Perswasion; and those that are Predestinated to Damnation, it will do them no good; so according to this Doctrine, the Apostle's Labour seems to be in vain.

QUERT 46. Moreover why should the Apostle be so fervent to Preach the Word of God, Colos. 1. 28. saying, *Whom we Preach, warning every Man; and teaching every Man in all Wisdom, that we may present every Man perfect in Christ Jesus*, if God had made Salvation impossible to the greater part of Mankind, by an Absolute Decree from Eternity?

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QUERT 47. Furthermore, why should the Apostle Paul say, *1 Tim. 2. 1, 2, 3, 4. I exhort therefore that Supplications, Prayers, &c. be made for all Men;* but that he affirmed it to be good and acceptable in the Sight of God our Saviour, who will have all Men to be saved, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth? Where then is the Absolute Decree?

QUERT 48. Why did the Apostle Peter say, *The Lord is not slack concerning his Promise (as some Men count Slackness) but long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance, 2 Pet. 3. 9.* If there had been an Absolute Decree, from Eternity, of Predestinating some to Damnation, as according to this Doctrine, some are so predestinated? Now whether did the Apostle speak Truth, Yea, or Nay? who plainly declared, that it is not Gods Will, *That any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance?* Therefore consider what kind of Doctrine that is, which giveth God and Christ the Contradiction, as well as the Holy Prophets, and Apostles; Openeth a door of Carelesness and Security to some, and maketh the Coming of Christ, and

and the Preaching of the Gospel wholly useless and ineffectual to others. O that the Vail of Ignorance and Blindness, that is upon the Minds of the Maintainers of this Doctrine, were taken off, that they might come to see the Glory of the Pure Evangelical Doctrine and Ministry, wherein the Love of God is held forth to all the Sons and Daughters of Men, upon their Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, *who tasted Death for every Man, Heb. 2. 9. And is the Propitiation for our Sins; and not for ours only, but also for the Sins of the whole World, 1 John 2. 2. The Light, the Way, the Truth, the Life, and besides whom, there is no Saviour.*

Shatton the 3d Month 1704.

BEHOLD I stand at the Door, and knock; if any Man hear my Voice, and open the Door, I will come in to him, and will Sup with him, and he with me, Revel. 3. 20.

And the Spirit and the Bride say, come. And let him that heareth, say, come. And let him that is a Thirst, come: And whosoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely, Rev. 22. 17.

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